

CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION INFORMAL POLICY GROUP

4 July 2017

Attendance:

Councillors:

Chairman: Horrill (P)

Ashton (P)

Burns (P)

Elks (P)

Hutchison (P)

Izard (P)

Read

Officer: Andy Hickman - Assistant Director (Policy & Planning).

Others in attendance:

Councillors: Berry, Gottlieb, Porter, Prince, Weir and Weston.

Officers in Attendance:

Laura Taylor – Chief Executive

Zoe James – Project Manager

Jenny Nell – Head of Strategic Planning

1. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2017/18 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Izard be appointed Vice Chairman for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 April 2017 (Report CAB2925 refers) be approved and adopted.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Charles Campion, Marcus Adams and other representatives of John Thompson and Partners (JTP), architects and master planners and approximately 220 members of the public.

Members of the public were informed that a broadsheet copy of JTP's presentation was available for collection at the end of the meeting.

In summary, the Chairman explained that the consultation exercise had involved many individuals and organisations and had generated considerable interest, leading to many varied views. These had been taken into consideration in forming a view for the site which would lead to the publication of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by early 2018.

The process towards the point of the formal SPD adoption would include an action plan that could be added to and also steps that could be focused upon and these would be shared with the public.

The City Council owned much of the site, but not all of it, and it would work via engagement and partnership to bring the SPD to fruition. This work would include consideration of the financial viability aspects.

The objective was to create a vibrant community, with wonderful places for residents, businesses and visitors that reflected and embedded: "what is Winchesterness".

4. **PRESENTATION BY THE JTP TEAM ON THE EMERGING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) AND VISION.**

Mr Adams gave a presentation on a new vision for the Central Winchester Regeneration Area.

Mr Adams referred to the extensive consultation process that had taken place in order to form the new vision, which had involved approximately 1500 people, organisations and groups as participants in the process and to share ideas for the future of the area. The community planning engagement process had included a community planning weekend (24 and 25 March 2017) with hands on planning groups and there had been a consensus that a 'bit by bit' incremental approach to regeneration was favoured.

The outcome of the consultation had identified 10 key themes:

- There was support for the Central Winchester regeneration.
- 'Winchesterness'.
- Streets, spaces and water.
- 'City experience' economy.
- Getting about.
- Buses.
- Heritage and culture.
- Housing and community.
- Delivery of meanwhile uses.
- Community participation.

The outcomes of consultation included a desire for high quality public realm; recognition of the creative economy; that there was a shortage of small, affordable and flexible workspaces and to make better coordinated use of buildings to create a flexible mixed use area, such as was experienced at the Guildhall in Bath and Fisherton Mill in Salisbury.

Transport had generated considerable views and these would be considered as part of the wider transport strategy as a whole. There was encouragement, with 65% in favour of providing car parking further out from the central core, except for residents and the disabled, and to alter traffic and bus flows to allow the public realm to be opened up. The requirements for servicing and loading for existing businesses and provision for pedestrians and cyclists would also need to be taken into consideration.

Mr Adams continued by providing further detail on the next steps for consideration.

Parking – this was a key consideration for the Central Winchester Regeneration area. The amount of parking to be provided had yet to be decided upon but the current thinking was that the spaces lost when the Friarsgate multi-storey car park was partially demolished would not be replaced in the central area and that consideration would be given to providing car parking on the edge of the central area and for the use of park and ride.

Flooding – flooding in zones 1-3 could be helped to be mitigated by the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs), permeable paving and the opening up of the brooks and directing water into watercourses.

Archaeology – this was a key consideration and there was now the opportunity for undertaking archaeological investigation on the bus station site.

History – the regeneration area had evolved from Roman times with the north - south street line dominating. The Friarsgate redevelopment had removed much of the street pattern and there was now the opportunity for it to be reinstated.

Winchesterness – This had in part been defined as a historic town that was walkable, relatable, safe and had an intimate scale. A feature was the enclosure ratio of its spaces (that is the relationship between the width of the street and height of its surrounding buildings). For example, The Square had an enclosure relationship of 1:1.4 and the Broadway by the Guildhall 1:06, and the success of these spaces, and others such as at Walcott Place and the Butter Cross could be replicated. A further feature was how the streets stepped in and out and the palette of materials that was used in the public realm, such as brick and paving.

Constraints and opportunities – there were no listed buildings within the regeneration area, but some did surround it. The Woolstaplers' Hall and Antiques Market would remain and more could be made of the blue and green

infrastructure within the site to make it more accessible. Culverts could be opened for water to run through the site and key views could be opened up, including those of the Cathedral and Guildhall.

The height of buildings – this was also a consideration with key buildings providing an interesting roof scape, including the Guildhall, St John's, and the Woolstaplers' Hall, and inward views from vantage points and such as Blue Ball Hill and St Giles Hill should be respected. Therefore, development would vary in height to include 3 to 5 storey development and lower development next to, for example, the Antiques Market and the St John's Alms houses. Broad indications of height would be tested against views.

The Broadway – the creation of a newly paved public area for pedestrians with no buses and car parking would improve the public realm, including the area around the King Alfred Statue. The area could be used for street markets within the Lower High Street/Guildhall area and street based activities on its sunny side. A public Riverside Walk could be provided between the Broadway and Friarsgate. Tanner Street would be extended to Cross Keys Passage, with a new east to west street to link into the Antiques Market. There would be three north to south streets and two east to west streets (Friarsgate Passage and Silver Hill), with smaller streets between. The Upper High Street would be amalgamated into this area.

Buses – There were options in close proximity to the regeneration area. One option was to locate the bus station on Middle Brook Street Car Park to run parallel to Friarsgate. An advantage of this would be to increase the pedestrian footfall for Friarsgate and the Brooks Shopping Centre, and new uses would be encouraged for the Brooks Shopping Centre.

Mr Adams proceeded to outline the emerging framework.

The regeneration envisaged three north to south streets: the Riverside Walk, Tanner Street and Middle Brook Street, with the streets differing in width. The regeneration area would be busy in the west and quieter in the east (where it could include housing and the Alms Houses Meadows). The intermediate space would provide for mixed uses, including residential and commercial uses on the upper floors above active ground floor space.

A Riverside Walk would include waterways lined by trees, with new vistas provided. Water channels would be opened and pervious paving provided to bring water into the open spaces. Tanner Street would be redeveloped at an enclosure ratio of 1:1.5 and Middle Brook Street would become a shared space with trees and linear water features. The Antiques Market could be a creative space such as Meeting House Square in Dublin. The Friarsgate Walk would be opened up.

A new contemporary bus hub and station building could front Friarsgate. The new bus station/ interchange would integrate with all modes of transport. Friarsgate could become two way in order that buses could come in and out without travelling around the one-way system.

Archaeology could be provided for through the provision of glass floors with lessons to be learned from the Jorvik Centre in York.

The delivery of the scheme would be sequential as the City Council already owned a significant part of the regeneration area, which would help with the coordination of the development and of the overall Vision, but it did not own the entire site. The first six months could involve schemes for the bus station (which had already received planning permission), the Broadway, the Antiques Market and the Brooks Shopping Centre. The wider linkage to other parts of the town through the three north to south streets and the east to west streets would be given further consideration, as would questions relating to viability. Uses that would contribute to the mixed use area, including arts and creativity, would be given further consideration. Further works on the technical surveys, including transport, archaeology, flooding and parking, would be progressed towards the SPD.

The proposals for the framework would be published on JTP's website on Wednesday 5 July 2017.

The Chairman thanked Mr Adams and JTP for the presentation and also the work of the Council Officers that had contributed towards it.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

During public participation the following points were made, which are summarised below:

Archaeology and Historic Buildings

John Stanning: Martin Biddle had referred to significant archaeology on the site, but had stated that it would take too long and be too expensive to dig up and therefore it should be kept in-situ. Was the Council now minded to undertake a proper archaeological study? The Chairman responded that the archaeological investigation at the bus station site was to fill a knowledge gap.

Alan Lovell: Would there be community involvement in the archaeological investigation, as had been the case at Hyde. An Anglo Saxon Museum was conceptually in the mix of uses if it could be made to work.

Penny Stuart: the retention of the Victorian Antiques Market was welcomed. There was a nice covered market in Oxford and open river walkways which made it a valued and special place.

Transport

Michael Cooper - Davies: the traffic flow in Middle Brook Street and Upper Brook Street had generated a lot of traffic and there had also been high growth in traffic all coming along Upper Brook Street, and this was unsustainable.

Mike Smith: JTP had carried out good work and the regeneration vision should be closely coordinated with the Winchester Transport Study in order to achieve the benefits. He asked whether there would be public participation in the transport study as well, for example via the Internet.

Patrick Davies: had transport operators been involved, as people were being encouraged to leave cars at home, but bus and coach operators would need to make it work. The Chairman replied that bus and coach operators had been involved and that there was ongoing dialogue.

A member of the public - Where would the existing coach services be re-located to if they were not permitted into the Broadway. The Chairman responded that this would be part of the wider transport study.

Chris Holloway: the proposals were good and sustainable. A town with less transport would have better air quality and have less impact on climate change. Retail would be improved by having less cars and the City Council had recently launched a car club for those that required a car. The transport strategy and movement study needed to be aligned and to be published on a website so that it could be seen that the alignment was taking place.

John Schoon: JTP's work was good, but there was concern regarding buses and public transportation. He asked where the car parks would be located. Also, the bus station would be on a busy road with noise and pollution and people having to stand next to it. People shopping at Sainsbury's at present had easy access to a bus (due to the adjacent location of the bus stops). A walk to the new bus station in the winter with heavy shopping bags would not be attractive for public transport. The maintenance of a bus access point in the new Silver Hill Street or Tanner Street should be given further consideration. An enhanced pedestrian area with public transport and private transport combined should be looked at.

Tim Lester: public consultation on transportation was supported. There was the practicality of getting cars out of the town. Those shopping for large articles would require a bus with parking nearby. Park and ride provision also needed to be flexible to provide services for those wishing to drink in the town or go to the cinema etc. There was no outer ring road in Winchester and those wishing to journey across town from one side to the other had to go through the centre, with matters made worse if there was a closure on the M3 motorway. He asked whether there was an alternative transport route that could be considered.

Joe Morgan: could more be made of the provision of bus lanes by the removal of parked cars, which would make park and ride buses more attractive over the use of private vehicles.

Phil Stallard: potential future developments in transport, for example the provision of driverless cars, may make the proposals for transport unviable and the potential for future developments in transport should be taken into account.

Kate McIntosh: JTP had done a good job. The planning framework would be developed and advancements such as driverless cars and driverless buses would be part of that consideration. The use of electricity would be good for climate change and young persons' health. It was important that any traffic rerouting should also consider the impact on St Georges Street and Jewry Street, which should also be pedestrian friendly.

Phil Gagg: The consultation had been good. There was a proposal for no parking in the central ring, but some people would want to park there and decisions would have to be balanced against the health of the majority. A more pedestrianised area and less traffic was favoured by 55 per cent of respondents, and this view should be supported. There may be some who needed to park in the central ring, for example those with disabilities. He questioned the points made by a previous speaker on how many people bought large, heavy items in the centre of Winchester.

Flooding

Joanna Pope: there was a lot of building taking place upstream of Winchester which could lead to flooding on the streets at the Brooks.

Housing

Bill Ledbetter: the provision of affordable and social housing was part of the brief. The regeneration could finance it, but this housing would be better located on the margins of the town rather than in the town centre. Housing (within the regeneration area) could be sold at a high price.

Viability

Phillip Morgan: There were not many money generators in the financial and commercial outcomes and what was required were shops and offices and expensive housing. There were already plenty of shops but no need for them. The scheme would require residents who would spend to make it work.

Other considerations – including arts and scheme content

Terry Gould: with the opportunity for so much (public) input, which had been the best for 30 years, how would the master plan get to the planning application stage? Like Scarborough, would it be of benefit to have a town team to help in this respect and to attract funding.

Adam Mulligan – the Hat Fair and the Arts Festivals provided a good image for Winchester and the creation of an outdoor space for the arts was welcomed and was required. Coitbury House had been used as a headquarters building for the Hat Fair and although rundown it was a good building and could be refurbished. Integrating arts into Winchester could bring colour into an existing boring part of the town.

Nicholas Craig - Harvey: Some of the findings were misleading. Where did the large amount of tourist visitors who visited Winchester come from and where did the 300,000 tourists who stayed overnight in Winchester actually stay. Out of a show of hands at the meeting, only two persons were under 30 years of age and he commented that this younger age group was not involved in the proposals nor were considerations for the future of children. The connectivity of the development and its open spaces could only take place if the site generated income through retailers and tourist hotels. He also commented that Winchester was surrounded by hills and that this was a consideration in park and ride and cycle access.

Elizabeth Horn: She had taken part in the March consultation and had participated in the Heritage Group. It was asked if the English Project, an additional cinema for Winchester and a small (or large) theatre could be included and also a covered market. The covered market could be a dual use space for covered performances, as was the case at Covent Garden in London and at Wimborne. These matters had not been taken sufficient account of.

A member of the public: St Clements Surgery was a stakeholder in the area. If the bus station was moved the surgery could be relocated to a better part of the site. An improved health centre that was away from traffic, with green space around it, and located in an improved building would be of benefit.

Gay Stanning: the scheme required good architecture and to have proper public consultation on the buildings that would be included within it.

Wendy Wyatt: The Time Out Market in Lisbon, Portugal, provided a lot of food (outlets) and was very creative. The inclusion of independent traders led to larger traders also wishing to relocate. Spitalfields Market and the Borough Market in London were other good examples. This space could supplement the Farmer's Market.

Sue Morgan: in Reykjavik, Iceland, an underground museum had been provided, with a relatively small public entrance at street level. Consideration could also be given to the inclusion of public sculptures, for example works by Elizabeth Frink. There should be more consultation on the use of water as it was not favoured when it was under grids.

A member of the public: a digital infrastructure should also be part of the mix, including technical items, such as the provision of Wi-Fi and click and collect.

A member of the public: consultation should include all sectors of society, including schools, older people's homes, the disabled and the blind.

Louise Goodall: stated that she ran a boutique shop in Jewry Street and would like to move to the cultural centre and it was important to provide retail space for smaller businesses that could use it.

The Chairman thanked public speakers for their contribution and stated that there was a balance to be taken into consideration to accommodate desired uses within the mix of uses across the site.

6. **NEXT STEPS**

The Chairman outlined the future actions to be taken, including further technical work:

- (i) Archaeological Assessment – a methodology was being prepared to understand the regeneration site and its wider relationship, commencing with archaeological work on the bus station site.
- (ii) Parking – an assessment for the potential for parking in the outer ring of the town centre would be considered.
- (iii) Flood risk – there was a recommendation to Cabinet, at its meeting to be held on 5 July 2017, to carry out works on Durngate to help alleviate flooding risks. The Council would then work with the Environment Agency on their modelling to reassess the impact of these works on the flood zone and its flood designation.
- (iv) Winchester Transport Study – there would be input into the wider Winchester Transport Study to test options, including one way or two way traffic flows.
- (v) Public realm – an assessment would be made of the potential for opening roads and passageways and exposure to water. It was the intention that the public realm would be of a high quality as the footprint would define the area for the future.
- (vi) Commercial considerations and viability – work would continue on how to bring the scheme to delivery. This would involve the City Council working in partnership with businesses, charities and other organisations that wanted to be involved. The expertise of JTP would continue to be used and the examples of successes in other towns, such as Chester, would be looked at.
- (vii) The delivery process would continue to be open in order that views gained through consultation could be understood.

RESOLVED:

That the next steps update be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6:00pm and concluded at 8:00pm.