

**CABINET**  
**1<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

## **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMY AND REGENERATION**

### **TIVERTON TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION MASTERPLAN AND INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**

**Cabinet Member**                      **Cllr Richard Chesterton**  
**Responsible Officer**                **Mrs Jenny Clifford, Head of Planning, Economy & Regeneration**

**Reason for the Report:** To consider the draft consultation document for Stage 1 public consultation in respect of the Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. That stage 1 public consultation commences in order to scope out the contents of the masterplan.**
- 2. That the draft masterplan material, together with emerging work on the Pannier Market and its surroundings, are approved for stage 1 public consultation.**
- 3. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration to finalise consultation material.**

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** Delivery of key priorities for Mid Devon, including a thriving economy, empowering local communities and caring for the environment.

**Financial Implications:** The procurement and cost of commissioning this masterplan was considered and approved at a previous meeting of the Cabinet. It is expected that the masterplanning process will identify opportunities and sites for regeneration / redevelopment. The Council has land and property assets within the study area. Any proposals to regenerate, develop or invest in these assets will have financial implications for the Council. These would be considered in detail as part of a subsequent and separate decision making process.

**Legal Implications:** Legal implications will arise from various property transactions but are anticipated to be managed with existing resource.

**Risk Assessment:** A full risk assessment will be undertaken as the projects in the scheme are developed. Failure to support a regeneration of Tiverton Town Centre could lead to deterioration in commercial activity and a less vibrant centre.

#### **1. BACKGROUND AND AIM OF CONSULTATION**

- 1.1. Material proposed to form the basis of the draft options for the Stage 1 public consultation in respect of the Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan

was presented to Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017. The Cabinet report included full details on the background, scope and purpose of the masterplan and is attached as **Appendix 1**. This report supplements and updates the 11<sup>th</sup> May Cabinet report.

- 1.2. The aim of the Stage 1 consultation stage is to gather comments from stakeholders and the general public on a number of draft options for town wide initiatives and key development areas that could be included within the town centre masterplan. The consultation will raise wider awareness of the regeneration project and test opinion on the draft framework and options.
- 1.3. The responses will be used to help shape the draft masterplan and investment programme which will be taken forward to Stage 2 of the project. Stage 2 is concerned with demonstrating that the preferred options are viable both in terms of deliverability and funding, and preparation of a draft masterplan document, action plan and implementation programme to be taken forward to Stage 2 public consultation.
- 1.4. Following consideration of the options material presented on 11<sup>th</sup> May, Cabinet resolved to defer the consultation document to allow further work to take place on the document and to draft more detailed consultation documentation, for the following reasons:
  - 1) To ensure the public are able to comment on tangible projects with a geographical focus rather than ideas.
  - 2) To refine aspects of the emerging scoping material to concentrate on areas considered to have the most potential.
  - 3) To provide some high level context over the deliverability of the suggested options, particularly the short term priorities, to give the public and local businesses confidence in delivery.

## **2. UPDATE ON REVISIONS TO DRAFT CONSULTATION MATERIAL**

- 2.1. An informal meeting between the consultants (WYG), officers and Cabinet members was held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 when the options presented to Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017 were discussed in detail and recommendations made to address the reasons for deferral of the masterplan options from the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017 Cabinet. These recommendations included the production of computer generated images to be included within the consultation document to assist the public's understanding of the vision for the town centre.
- 2.2. A second informal meeting between the consultants (WYG), officers and Cabinet members was held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017. A detailed draft Stage 1 consultation document was presented to the meeting. The revised draft options took into account of the following:
  - 1) References to decked parking and riverside development such as restaurants/cafes and bars removed. West Exe car park removed as a potential development site.

- 2) Confirmation of the 8 metre strip already shown on existing plans as public walkway/river edge. Aspirational access routes along the river edge removed.
- 3) Future plans for the Town Hall discussed with the Town Council. Any reference to arts and cultural hub removed.
- 4) The bus station shown as a separate development site to be considered for improvement and/or redevelopment in the longer term.
- 5) Additional land around Phoenix Lane (previously not included) now shown within the potential development area.
- 6) Hotel site no longer identified as a numbered development site.
- 7) Site 8 extended to include current entrance to Tivoli and identified as a priority.
- 8) Potential development areas around the market extended. Additional land for future redevelopment identified to include land to the west of the market, a larger area for site 11, the existing garage and Lloyds TSB car park.
- 9) Market Walk identified as short term priority.
- 10) Relocated coach parking included as short term priority. St Peter's church identified as possible location for drop-off/pick-up.
- 11) Former post office site extended to include New Hall and immediate area.
- 12) Lowman Green site included as important eastern gateway.
- 13) Further sites identified within West Exe to support town-wide regeneration initiatives and enhancement.

2.3. Further actions arising from these informal discussions included:

- 1) Improve some of the images within the material.
- 2) Leave options open as to a potential site for coach parking.
- 3) Consider extending site 19.
- 4) Liaise with Environment Agency with regard to riverside activities and greening.

2.4. The draft options consultation material has now been updated and amended to reflect the points in 2.2 and 2.3 above and is attached as **Appendix 2**.

2.5. In addition, a site meeting with the Environment Agency has been held during which options for the riverside were discussed. The Environment Agency representative indicated support for the environmental initiatives in the emerging work, including riverside enhancements. However, the considerable flood flow hazards mean that some of the aspirations would be unsuitable. Their advice is summarised below.

- 1) No trees or planters along the riverside walk, although possibility of introducing strips of grass and wild flower mixes and bat/bird/invertebrate boxes
- 2) Nothing moored in the river, e.g. restaurant boat, due to high velocity flows which would likely sink it.
- 3) Use of the river frontage for riverside stalls and boat hire (such as pedaloes) could be acceptable provided that they can be quickly removed and stored safely in the event of a flood. There should be no permanent structures erected on the flood defence.

The Environment Agency will have opportunity to comment formally on the emerging work as part of the consultation process.

### **3. MASTERPLAN MATERIAL FOR STAGE 1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

- 3.1. The updated draft consultation material for the Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan is attached for consideration (**Appendix 2**).
- 3.2. The public consultation will help scope out the contents of the masterplan and shape the draft masterplan document for future consultation. The material contains a number of suggestions for key town wide initiatives and options for development areas.
- 3.3. The consultation draft sets out the vision for Tiverton as a 21st Century market town and sets the challenge of growing Tiverton without losing the intimacy and character of a market town, but providing all the arts, culture, education, leisure expected in a thriving town.
- 3.4. It also sets a number of objectives: to create a great environment, ease of movement, a vibrant market, inviting gateways into the town centre, an expanded cultural programme, an active waterfront, an expanded/new cinema, larger retail footprints, an expanded retail component within the town centre, and quality public realm and green spaces. These are set out in more detail in the Cabinet report dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017.
- 3.5. The material sets out a number of potential initiatives:
  - 1) **Accessibility:** Tiverton is an easily accessible destination with good road connections and access to public transport. The town centre also needs to be accessible in terms of parking, coach and bus parking and drop off points, pedestrian and cycle links. Attractive pedestrianised areas and a holistic wayfinding and lighting strategy would enhance the town centre.
  - 2) **Identity:** Tiverton should be seen as a quality market town and destination, with a clear brand focusing on food, drink, arts & crafts and leisure. The public realm should reinforce the identity with flexible market and event space.
  - 3) **Environment:** High quality public realm with public art and green space, celebrating the quality of the historic townscape.
  - 4) **Quality:** Tiverton is seen as a quality shopping and recreational destination with an improved environment offering a range of facilities for local people and visitors.
- 3.6. A number of key projects and development site opportunities are identified, including the Phoenix Lane corridor and the Pannier Market area. Some of these involve Mid Devon Council property assets. These key projects could

help kick start the regeneration of the town centre and promote inward investment.

- 3.7. Finally, some suggested short, medium and long term priorities and next steps are set out.
- 3.8. The Stage 1 consultation will focus on scoping out the contents of the masterplan and considering the key issues and options.
- 3.9. During Stage 1 consultation statutory consultees, business interests, organisations and the public will have opportunity to comment on what should be included within the masterplan and the options presented in the consultation material.
- 3.10. Consultation responses will be analysed and will feed into the identification of preferred options. These preferred options will then be viability tested and opportunities for delivery and funding explored before the final options are incorporated into a draft masterplan document which would then proceed to Stage 2 consultation.

#### **4. CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 4.1. Stage 1 public consultation is proposed to take place over a 6 week period with provisional dates in April and May 2018.
- 4.2. Means of consultation will include:
  - 1) Public exhibition, potentially to be held in the Pannier Market or other suitable local venue – date to be agreed.
  - 2) Presentation to Tiverton Town Council with invitations to other Town and Parish Councils.
  - 3) Exhibition boards erected in Phoenix House.
  - 4) Dedicated website pages.
  - 5) Publicity arrangements are to include press release, Facebook, Twitter and press advert.

#### **5.0 THE PANNIER MARKET AREA: VISIONING AND EXPLORATION OF OPPORTUNITIES**

- 5.1 Work on the Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan project has helped to highlight the potential of the town's Pannier Market, the market setting and surrounding area to act as a focus and catalyst for wider regeneration and investment activity in the town centre. It is also important in achieving the emerging vision for the town.
- 5.2 The Council has taken the opportunity to act proactively and to start the process of developing a vision of how the Pannier Market and surrounding area could be enhanced, make a greater contribution towards regeneration and deliver on its potential within the wider town centre context.

- 5.3 The Council has commissioned consultants to undertake an urban feasibility study to look at visioning of this part of the town, together with options for the enhancement and potential redevelopment of the area surrounding the Pannier Market. The brief was simple: How could Tiverton Pannier Market and its surrounding area play a more positive role in the town?
- 5.4 The consultants looked at the existing market's strength and weaknesses, its historic context and its form and function within the town. Its relationship with the town centre was compared and contrasted with the market at Tavistock.
- 5.5 A number of initial ideas and a vision for the market area have been developed as a starting point for further work and to form the basis for consultation. A design concept has emerging illustrating options and opportunities for regeneration and redevelopment in and around the market area.
- 5.6 The feasibility study takes a brief look at a potential range of opportunities and starts to consider that these might look like. Emerging suggestions at this stage include transforming the market building itself into a mix of permanent restaurant and café uses combined with employment studios, redeveloping the area around the market for mixed uses of retail, leisure and residential, and the introduction of a new town square. The suggestions look at "greening" the whole area and including a market garden, and street market space spilling out onto Fore Street.
- 5.7 The feasibility study and design concept document is attached as an **Appendix 3** to this report.

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<b>Background Papers</b>	Cabinet Report and Minutes 11th May 2017
<b>Circulation of the Report</b>	Councillor Richard Chesterton Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration