

APPENDIX A

Tiverton Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan SPD

Stage 1 Consultation Summary

The consultation asked for feedback on Masterplan SPD exhibition boards displayed at Phoenix House, in the Pannier Market, and online on the Mid Devon website. The consultation ran from 30th April until 10th June 2018. There were two manned exhibitions at the Pannier Market: the first at the Electric Nights event on Saturday 5th May, and the second on Friday 18th May.

In total, there were 55 responses received during the consultation period. Responses were received via mail, email, comments boxes at Phoenix House and the Pannier Market, and through an online questionnaire. This document summarises the responses received. The figures in brackets indicate the number of respondents commenting.

1. Respondents were asked whether they considered there were any other issues facing the town centre that were not captured on the exhibition boards.

28 respondents answered this question. The main concerns were:

Lack of public toilets, particularly near the bus station/centre (5), littering, street cleaning and maintenance (3), impact of Junction 27 development (2), anti-social behaviour at night (2), lack of vibrancy and atmosphere especially during the evenings (1), lack of safe/secure cycling opportunities (1), lack of footfall (1), shops closing down (1), high street is dying (1), the future of the hospital (1), need to involve local businesses and organisations more (1), limited public transport, especially in the evenings (1), lack of big name retail units (1), lack of opportunity for small shops (1), cinema needs replacing (1), online shopping (1), does not cater for electric vehicles (1), lack of traffic regulation on Fore Street (1), competition from neighbourhood centres (1), lack of good quality eating (1), no good riverside access (1).

2. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they supported the vision and objectives for Tiverton Town Centre in creating a better place for people to live, work, visit and attract new investment and business. 30 respondents answered this question.

25 respondents supported the vision and objectives for creating a better place for people to live.

22 respondents supported the vision and objectives for creating a better place for people to work.

23 respondents supported the vision and objectives for creating a better place for people to visit.

22 respondents supported the vision and objectives for creating a better place to attract new investment and business.

3. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they supported the Framework Masterplan Vision to be delivered over the next 15 years.

Of the 29 respondents that answered this question, 13 supported it, 6 did not support it, 8 were undecided and 2 were neutral.

Some of the comments received:

Clearly there is a need to do something to bring more life to the town. We think it is essential that they succeed in bringing life to the town which will otherwise continue to fade away and become less relevant to people.

Tiverton has all the assets to be a really great market town and I think these proposals would help to achieve that.

The plan needs an overarching vision of what the town is to become. What is a modern market town? Are we working to a model or trying to emulate other towns? We may be able to benefit from their experience.

I applaud the fact that MDDC have finally realised that something major needs to be done to address the decline of Tiverton's town centre which has unfolded over the last 2 decades. From what I have seen of the masterplan, I believe it is very encouraging but it needs to be done properly.

Independent traders and businesses need to be encouraged as well as new amenities to go hand in hand with all the housing estates being built on the outskirts of the town.

Work on infrastructure first before wasting millions on vanity projects; enhance what we already have; make it all link up better and work better; make the whole of Tiverton cycle friendly and enhance offering for cycle tourism.

Tiverton needs better than this - the next 20 years will see massive increases in electric cars, new modes of transport, broadband roll out, online shopping, increasing leisure demands for environmentally based planning - this has none of that. We should be looking at a scheme that attracts investment, has a USP, is unique, brings history to life, and looks forward not trying to recover the past and most of all not basing it on the Pannier Market.

4. Respondents were asked to say what they thought about 4 key themes: accessibility, identity, environment and quality.

37 respondents answered this question. The main areas of comments were:

Accessibility

Ten respondents commented that provision for pedestrians, cyclists and bus facilities, with an appropriate parking strategy (accessible and affordable), and traffic management (including for taxis), should be integral to the proposals. Ten respondents commented on the need to improve links/signage/promotion of visitor attractions such as Canal, Old Blundells, Castle, Museum, and Tourist Information.

Seven respondents commented that the route from Tiverton Parkway should be improved (e.g. shuttle bus) and more made of cycles routes and entrance points into the town.

Four respondents wanted to see future technologies and smarter travel methods embraced, e.g. electric car charging points, shared mobility vehicles, technology used for information provision, Wi-Fi enabled town centre.

Two respondents wanted well-maintained toilets in accessible places, e.g. the bus station.

One respondent did not want to see pedestrianisation of the town centre, whilst one wanted to make the town centre car free. One respondent did not want to see restrictions on day-time deliveries for independent traders.

Identity

Half of respondents (13) wanted to see more made of the historic architecture of the town, its historic streets and buildings as this would increase Tiverton's attractiveness.

Six respondents commented that a good mix of independent retail stores and a cultural element would offer more reasons to visit; one commented that Tiverton needs a really distinctive retail offer; and one that the town needs an anchor supermarket.

Three respondents commented that the night-time economy needs to be improved with more quality restaurants, a welcoming night-time atmosphere, and later shop opening, and this would attract local people and visitors into the town in the evening; and two wanted more emphasis on leisure (e.g. skating, bowling, gyms).

Four respondents wanted to highlight the creative arts/crafts going on in the town and promote local events; one wanting a link to the Tiverton Community Arts Theatre project.

Two respondents comments that flexible uses of buildings and units in the town centre would enable future trends in the retail sector to be addressed, e.g. good quality live/work and flexible workspaces.

One respondent thought that the project should capitalise on the Pannier Market and the river which make Tiverton an individual place; and one suggested consolidated the town around the market and reducing the retail area.

One respondent thought that the proposals were based on outdated thinking about retail space, town centres and transport, and that the focus should be on a scheme that attracts

investment, has a USP, is unique, brings history to life, and looks forward, not trying to recover the past; and one respondent questioned that the project provided a strategy for making Tiverton a place people want to visit.

One respondent suggested involving community groups in establishing Tiverton's identity, and one suggested making the town dementia-friendly.

Environment

Six respondents highlighted the need to protect and enhance the riverside frontage and extend riverside walks. Five respondents thought the Council should identify opportunities for the provision green infrastructure/biodiversity gain/more trees and plants throughout and keep green spaces around the town.

The inclusion of public art and other features of interest (fountains, sculptures), street performance and active demonstrations of sports and other physical activity were suggested by one respondent; whilst one did not want money spent on public art.

One respondent highlighted the importance of archaeology and the many listed buildings in the town centre. One suggested the parks would benefit from a makeover.

Three respondents wanted to maintain views and a sense of space, and one suggested making more of/switching on the Leat.

Quality

Six respondents wanted to see a better quality public realm delivered first; two wanted public realm improvements for mobility (scooters and wheelchairs); and one, less street clutter.

Six respondents wanted to see improved community planting and flower displays, public seating and weather protection.

Two respondents commented on the need for a shop front policy, and two wanted to see buildings properly maintained and improved.

5. Respondents were asked to comment on a number of key sites (19 in total) for enhancement and/or development across the town centre.

25 respondents answered the question: *"Do you agree with the key sites that have been identified across the town centre"*? Of these, 16 responded "Yes", 8 responded "No", and one supported only the market site.

The sites were divided into 7 groups for the questionnaire. Comments were as follows.

The Market

Almost half of respondents liked the idea of opening up the entrances to the market, one suggested replicas of the old arched market entrances.

Comments were mixed on redeveloping Market Walk with some specifically wanting to see redevelopment (3). Respondents commented that the Pannier Market building itself should remain a key feature (4) and either not losing its character (1) or returning to its original character and footprint (2). One respondent thought that setting market stalls amongst trees would give a temporary market atmosphere.

Respondents liked the art and craft focus for the market stalls but wanted to see exhibition space (3) and opportunities for pop-up shops/workshops (2). One respondent wanted the market to be used for social and community purposes.

Comments were mixed on the inclusion of housing. One respondent did not want to see any town centre housing, another thought that sensitive housing development would enhance the area. Another thought that the building design did not suit Tiverton.

Three respondents wanted to see the pub improved to have a wider appeal.

Some respondents wanted car parking retained (3) whilst one thought it should be reduced. One respondent thought it should be developed into a multi-storey car park with retail on the ground floor.

West Exe/Riverside

Almost all respondents wanted to see good use made of the river frontage and its look improved and greened, with riverside walks being extended (20). Seven respondents gave ideas for activities on the river, including fishing, canoeing, walking, pubs, entertainment and restaurants (7). One respondent thought hydro power could become a feature.

Two respondents wanted to see a footbridge over the river.

One respondent thought much more could be done for West Exe, and one thought it important to retain its village atmosphere. Two respondents wanted to retain West Exe parking, one suggesting it should be free.

Western Gateway/Town Hall

Half of respondents (13) did not want to see houses built on the site to the rear of the Town Hall. They thought it would prevent an opportunity to open up the river frontage for community and leisure space. One respondent commented that loss of the space by the river prevents its use for functions and receptions linked to the Town Hall. Four respondents thought the Town Hall should be developed further as a venue.

Two respondents wanted to see St Andrews Street North pedestrianised (except for access) and the entrance to the Museum and Town Hall improved. One respondent did not like the

idea of public space in front of the Town Hall due to potential traffic and pedestrian conflicts, however, one respondent thought the area could become a hub for restaurants/coffee shops.

Fore Street

There was some support for improving the public realm in Fore Street, including paving, road surfacing, street furniture, shopfronts, and the look of some of the buildings, streets and footpaths (5). One respondent thought the artist's impression was dated and did not reflect Tiverton's history, and the coloured pavements will become dirty, uneven and dangerous.

One respondent was concerned with empty retail units and wanted to see a reduction in business rates, and one respondent wanted to see Fore Street focus on food, art and literature rather than household and clothing retail.

One respondent wanted to see more to do in the evening with a more welcoming atmosphere. One wanted to see the theatre relocated into the town centre. Two respondents wanted to see better use made upper floors for housing.

One respondent thought traffic should be further restricted, and one thought it should not be restricted.

Beck Square

Seven respondents commented that Tiverton Museum should be at the forefront of thinking for Beck Square. Half of respondents (13) wanted the Beck Square car park retained, as it provides level access to the town centre and visitor access to the Museum. Four respondents suggested pedestrian links from Fore Street and Phoenix Lane to the Museum and Beck Square should be improved and/or greened.

Four respondents did not want to see development on Beck Square, particularly as it would reduce opportunities/visibility for the Museum, whilst one respondent thought Beck Square has unfulfilled potential.

Phoenix Lane

Seven respondents commented that more should be made of the Phoenix Lane space in terms of providing seating, green areas, market stalls, and event and performance space; but clutter should be reduced (1) and the open feel of the space should be retained (2).

Four respondents wanted to keep the Burma Star Memorial Garden, and 3 thought it important to retain views of the hills/Iron Age Fort. Two respondents thought it important to retain historic buildings and protect their settings.

Seven respondents agreed with improving the cinema but thought it should retain its retro character.

Southern Gateway

Two respondents wanted to retain the location for the bus station. One respondent thought that any relocation of the bus station should maintain current bus services and good access to the town centre, and one liked the café by the bus station. Three respondents wanted to see toilets at the bus station.

Two respondents wanted to see improved public access and ease of movement to the area around the southern gateway. One commented that car parking should be retained, and one that the multi-storey car park needs a facelift.

Other comments

Four respondents commented that more should be made of the Old Blundells buildings and gardens, and four wanted to see improvements and a clear strategy for Lowman Green. One respondent wanted to see continued regeneration of Gold Street.

One respondent wanted the Tesco area included in the plan. One thought that allowing the Lidl development near Tesco would hamper attempts to focus on town centre, and one suggested renovating the land between Tesco and Travis Perkins for restaurants/cafés/bowling/skating.

One respondent suggested opening up a pedestrian route between the Pannier Market and Morrisons and the hospital, and two suggested Including Tiverton Castle in the plan.

6. Whilst there was no specific question about parking the questionnaire, many respondents comments on this.

Two respondents comments that Tiverton needs convenient parking at affordable price; 8 respondents said parking was too expensive.

Eleven respondents objected to the loss of Beck Square as a car park as it has level access to the town and is close to the Museum; 4 respondents were concerned with the loss of spaces in the multi-storey car park.

Other suggests were: a park and ride from Tesco free car park (1); Council take over Tesco car park and shoppers claim back fee when they shop (1), new underground car park with bus and coach parking above accessed from Phoenix Lane (1).

One respondent wanted to keep small private car parks; and one thought there was a need for more car parking.

Two respondents highlighted the need for a proper parking strategy as a short term priority.

One respondent wanted to see electric vehicle charging points and suggested a free Tesla Supercharger Station installation.

7. Respondents were asked “Where do you think the coach drop off point should be, and why”?

Forty respondents answered this question. The suggested locations were: the bus station (9), William Street (4), Beck Square (3), near the Market (3), behind Banburys/Argos (2), Phoenix Lane (3) and with coach parking in Blundells Road (1), close to Tourist Information (1), at the multi-storey (1), by the river (1) and at Tesco (1). One respondent questioned the need to provide a coach drop-off point.

8. Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the short, medium and long term priorities for the town centre.

Twenty-two respondents answered this question. Of these, 10 respondents agreed with all 3 priorities, 3 respondents agreed only with the short term priorities, 2 respondents agreed with the short and medium term priorities only, one respondent agreed with the medium and long term priorities only, and 6 respondents did not agree with any of the priorities.

Comments received on the priorities included:

Can Tiverton afford such schemes and where will the money come from?

Past development schemes/proposals have been carried out at great expense but did not proceed. Are these present proposals just an aspiration or are they real?

Simple things such as toilets, free parking and bus parking should be priorities; also replacing paving slabs in town centre.

Cut business rates to encourage new traders.

Long term approach needed - priority should not be given to making money immediately; craft units will need to be subsidised because they draw tourists in.

Could we have targets and dates and feedback on how it is going? Put boards up in the market as you have done for the masterplan, highlighting what has been done.